WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device for collecting viable gas-borne matter comprising:

an inlet;

an outlet;

a plate provided intermediate the inlet and the outlet and having a first surface facing the inlet and a second surface facing the outlet; and

a substance provided on the first surface of the plate for capturing viable matter carried in a gas drawn through the inlet;

wherein the substance is configured to maintain the viable matter in a living state without promoting growth of the viable matter.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein the substance is at least one of a gel and a semi-solid material.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein the substance is relatively colorless.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein the substance comprises a hydrocolloid and at least one nutrient.

5. The device of claim 4, wherein the hydrocolloid is selected from the group consisting of algal type hydrocolloid materials, botanical type hydrocolloid materials, microbial type hydrocolloid materials, animal type hydrocolloid materials, and combinations thereof.

6. The device of claim 5, wherein the algal type hydrocolloid materials comprise at least one of agar, carrageenan, and alginate.

7. The device of claim 5, wherein the botanical type hydrocolloid materials comprise at least one of arabic, karaya, guar, locust tara, tamarind, daraya, ghatti, tragacanth, cellulose, starch, pectin, knonjac, glactomannans, xyloglucan, and combinations thereof.

8. The device of claim 5, wherein the microbial type hydrocolloid materials comprise at least one of curdlan, xanthan, dextran, gellan, B-glucans, chitosan, alginates, inulin, CRC biopolumer, and combinations thereof.

9. The device of claim 5, wherein the microbial type animal type hydrocolloid materials comprise at least one of gelatin, caseinate, whey, and chitosan.

10. The device of claim 4, wherein the nutrient is one of a sugar, a cell culture serum, an amino acid, a blood lipid, and a protein.

11. The device of claim 10, wherein the nutrient is selected from the group consisting of glucose, sucrose, bovine serum, glutamic acid, albumin, hemoglobin, charcoal, sodium glycerophosphate, mercaptoacetic acid, sodium chloride, potasium citrate, potasium chloride, calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, monopotassium phosphate, disodium phosphate, sodium thioglycollate, L-cysteine hydrochloric, peptone, sodium phosphate, potassium phosphate, and combinations thereof.

12. The device of claim 10, wherein the nutrient also acts as a pH buffer.

13. The device of claim 4, wherein the substance further comprises at least one of a humectant, water, and an anti-bacterial agent.

14. The device of claim 13, wherein the humectant is selected from the group consisting of mineral oil, plant oil, peanut oil, soybean oil, vegetable oil, corn oil, molasses, honey, corn syrup, fruitrim, invertase, invert sugar, glycerin, polyols, Triacetin, an hydrogenated glucose syrup, a polydextrose nutrient, and combinations thereof.

15. The device of claim 13, wherein the anti-bacterial agent is selected from propylene glycol, chloramphenicol, vancomycin, and combinations thereof.

16. The device of claim 13, wherein the substance further comprises an antifungal.

17. The device of claim 1, wherein the substance may be stored without refrigeration between approximately 12 to 24 months.

18. The device of claim 1, wherein the substance is configured to allow removal of the viable matter from the substance in a liquid.

19. The device of claim 18, wherein the liquid is water.

20. The device of claim 1, wherein the viable matter comprises at least one of mold spores, insects, insect parts, and skin cells.

21. The device of claim 1, wherein the viable matter comprises a virus.

22. The device of claim 1, wherein the viable matter comprises bacteria.

23. The device of claim 1, wherein the inlet is configured for coupling to a device configured to remove matter from the gas before the gas enters the inlet.

24. The device of claim 1, wherein the device is configured for coupling to an exterior surface of a sampling device.

25. The device of claim 1, wherein the device comprises a top portion including the inlet and a bottom portion including the outlet, wherein the device is adapted to allow decoupling of the top portion and the bottom portion to remove the plate.

26. The device of claim 1, wherein the device is a single-use product that is discarded after capturing viable matter.

27. The device of claim 1, wherein the device includes a second inlet, wherein the inlets are provided at different locations in relation to the suspension medium.

28. The device of claim 1, wherein the plate is made of at least one of glass, porous glass fibers, a ceramic material, a porous polymeric material, and a metal.

29. A collection device for use in sampling gas that contains viable matter comprising:

a suspension medium for preserving viable matter in a living state; and

means for directing a flow of gas toward the suspension medium;

wherein the suspension medium is configured for capturing viable matter included in the gas as the gas is drawn through the means for directing a flow of gas.

30. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the means for directing a flow of gas comprises an inlet.

31. The collection device of claim 30, wherein the inlet tapers from a top of the inlet to a bottom of the inlet.

32. The collection device of claim 31, wherein the bottom of the inlet has a rectangular shape when viewed in the axial direction.

33. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the suspension medium has is a gel or a semisolid material.

34. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the suspension medium is configured to preserve the viable matter without promoting further maturation of the viable matter.

35. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the suspension medium includes a humectant, an anti-bacterial agent, and a hydrocolloid.

36. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the suspension medium comprises water and at least one of mineral oil, starch, glycerin, galatin, and carageenan.

37. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the suspension medium comprises water and at least one of gellan, glycerin, calcium chloride, a polyol, honey, corn syrup, and pectin.

38. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the viable matter comprises at least one of a bacterium and a virus.

39. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the viable matter comprises at least one of a mold spore, anthrax, an insect, an insect part.

40. The collection device of claim 29, wherein the collection device is a cassette having a top portion and a bottom portion and a plate provided within the cassette, wherein the top portion and bottom portion may be separated to remove the plate.

41. A plate for use in a gas-borne matter collection device comprising:

a substance provided on a surface of the plate for preserving viable matter in a living state without generally promoting growth of the viable matter.

42. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance has is relatively is a gel or a semisolid material.

43. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance includes a humectant, an anti-bacterial agent, and a hydrocolloid.

44. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance includes a hydrocolloid material and at least one nutrient.

45. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance comprises water and at least one of mineral oil, starch, glycerin, galatin, and carageenan.

46. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance comprises water and at least one of gellan, glycerin, calcium chloride, a polyol, honey, corn syrup, and pectin.

47. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance comprises a hydrocolloid and at least one nutrient.

48. The plate of claim 47, wherein the hydrocolloid is selected from the group consisting of algal type hydrocolloid materials, botanical type hydrocolloid materials, microbial type hydrocolloid materials, animal type hydrocolloid materials, and combinations thereof.

49. The plate of claim 47, wherein the nutrient is one of a sugar, a cell culture serum, an amino acid, a blood lipid, and a protein.

50. The plate of claim 49, wherein the nutrient is selected from the group consisting of glucose, sucrose, bovine serum, glutamic acid, albumin, hemoglobin, charcoal, sodium glycerophosphate, mercaptoacetic acid, sodium chloride, potasium citrate, potasium chloride, calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, monopotassium phosphate, disodium phosphate, sodium thioglycollate, L-cysteine hydrochloric, peptone, sodium phosphate, potassium phosphate, and combinations thereof.

51. The plate of claim 47, wherein the nutrient also acts as a pH buffer.

52. The plate of claim 47, wherein the substance further comprises at least one of a humectant, water, and an anti-bacterial agent.

53. The plate of claim 52, wherein the humectant is selected from the group consisting of mineral oil, plant oil, peanut oil, soybean oil, vegetable oil, corn oil, molasses, honey, corn syrup, fruitrim, invertase, invert sugar, glycerin, polyols, Triacetin, an hydrogenated glucose syrup, a polydextrose nutrient, and combinations thereof.

54. The plate of claim 41, wherein the substance is configured to preserve viable matter without promoting further maturation of the viable matter.

55. The plate of claim 47, wherein the viable matter comprises at least one of a bacterium and a virus.

56. The plate of claim 47, wherein the viable matter comprises at least one of a mold spore, anthrax, an insect, an insect part.

57. A method of collecting viable matter included in a gaseous atmosphere, the method comprising:

directing a flow of gas toward a suspension medium, the suspension material configured to maintain viable matter in a living state;

capturing viable matter carried in the gas in the suspension material; and

removing the viable matter from the suspension material.

58. The method of claim 57, wherein the step of removing the viable matter from the suspension material comprises adding at least a portion of the suspension material to a liquid.

59. The method of claim 58, wherein the liquid is water.

60. The method of claim 57, wherein removing the viable matter from the suspension material comprises shaking the suspension material.

61. The method of claim 57, further comprising providing nutrients to the viable matter after the step of removing the viable matter from the suspension material.

62. The method of claim 60, wherein the step of providing nutrients to the viable matter comprises placing the viable matter in an agar medium.

63. The method of claim 62, wherein the suspension material includes a humectant, an anti-bacterial agent, and a hydrocolloid material.

64. The method of claim 57, wherein the suspension material does not include an amount of nutrients sufficient to allow development of the viable matter.

65. The method of claim 57, wherein the viable matter comprises at least one of mold, fungus, and bacterium.